

Serial Number: 09/783,894Docket Number: 10004374-1**REMARKS**

Upon entry of this Response, claims 1-12 and 15-21 remain pending in the present application. Claim 15 has been amended, and claims 13-14 have been canceled herein without prejudice or disclaimer. In view of the fact that the remaining claims have been indicated as allowable, Applicants request allowance of the present application.

As an initial matter, it is noted that in item 4, the Office Action states that claims 1-21 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by US Patent 6,170,008 B1 issued to Bahlmann et al. However, this statement conflicted with the indication that claims 1-12 and 17-21 were allowable in item 6 of the Office Action and that claims 15 and 16 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim in item 7 of the Office Action. In a brief telephone conversation with the Examiner, it was confirmed that only claims 13 and 14 were rejected under §102 and that the statement that claims 1-21 were rejected was an inadvertent error.

In addition, claims 13 and 14 are canceled herein without prejudice or disclaimer, thereby rendering this grounds of rejection moot. Claims 13 and 14 are canceled herein solely to place the present application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection of claims 13 and 14 be withdrawn. In addition, Applicants expressly reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of the canceled claims in a continuation application.

In item 7 of the Office Action, claims 15-16 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 15 has been so amended. Claim 16 depends from claim 15. Accordingly, Applicants request that the objection to claims 15 and 16 be withdrawn.

Serial Number: 09/783,894Docket Number: 10004374-1**CONCLUSION**

Applicants respectfully request that all outstanding objections and rejections be withdrawn and that this application and all presently pending claims be allowed to issue. If the Examiner has any questions or comments regarding Applicants' response, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone Applicants' undersigned counsel.

Respectfully submitted,

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